

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ACDA-07 SAM-01 AID-05 EUR-12 /103 W

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P R 201230Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1749

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

USCINCEUR

COMIDEASTFOR

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 1460

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MOPS, SU, ET

SUBJECT: REPORTED SUDANESE MILITARY RESPONSE
TO ETHIOPIAN EVENTS

1. WE HAVE BEGUN TO HEAR ISOLATED REPORTS RE SUDANESE
MILITARY ACTIVITY THAT, IF TRUE, REFLECT THE VERY REAL
GOS CONCERN OVER ETHIOPIAN DEVELOPMENTS ALREADY
EXPRESSED TO US AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL (KHARTOUM 1398
NOTAL). WE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

(A) A RUMOR THAT 2,000 SUDANESE TROOPS HAVE BEEN
MOVED FROM THE EGYPTIAN/ISRAELI FRONT TO TOKAR ON THE
RED SEA JUST NORTH OF THE ETHIOPIAN-SUDANESE BORDER;
AND

(B) A PRIVATE STATMENT TO THE AMBASSADOR BY THE
COMMANDER OF SUDANESE ARMOR ON MAY 13 THAT TANKS WILL
NOT FIGURE IN THIS YEAR'S MAY 25 REVOLUTION DAY PARADE
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IN KHARTOUM (AN UNUSUAL OMISSION SUGGESTING THEY WILL

BE DEPLOYED ELSEWHERE).

2. REALIZE ABOVE IS RATHER THIN, AND WE WILL ATTEMPT FLESH OUT IN COMING DAYS. IN ANY CASE, GOS CANNOT HELP BUT BE APPREHENSIVE ABOUT INEVITABLE BORDER PROBLEMS THAT WOULD RESULT FROM MASS PEASANTS' MARCH AGAINST ERITREANS. ANY INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO EMBASSY CAIRO ON RUMORED RETURN OF SUDANESE TROOPS TO HOME SOIL WOULDN BE WELCOMED.

3. RECENT OR CURRENT AIRSTRIP IMPROVEMENT WORK MAY WELL BE MISINTERPRETED BY SOME AS BEING RELATED TO SUDANESE MILITARY PREPARATIONS. PORT SUDAN AIRPORT WAS REOPENED TODAY WITH NEW HARDENED LANDING STRIP, AND KASSALA AIRPORT NOW CLOSED FOR SIMILAR UPGRADING. THESE PROJECTS WERE APPARENTLY ARRANGED SOME TIME AGO TO UTILIZE SERVICES OF GERMAN AND ITALIAN ROAD-BUILDING FIRMS IN AREA. WORK IS NOT, WE BELIEVE, DIRECTLY RESPONSIVE TO MORE RECENT SUDANESE CONCERN AT POSSIBLE BORDER TENSIONS.
BREWER

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